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Remarks

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Executive Secretary  
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# Soviet Propaganda Alert

No. 18

January 31, 1984

## SUMMARY

Major Soviet propaganda themes and developments from November 1 to December 31:

U.S.-Soviet Relations. Soviet columnists described the current state of relations as one of "acute deterioration" following the KAL airliner incident, the U.S. military action in Grenada, and the NATO deployment of new U.S. missiles in Western Europe. See p. 1

U.S. "State Terrorism." Moscow charged that the U.S. is engaging in "state-sponsored terrorism" by its actions in Grenada, Lebanon and Central America. See p. 2

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces in Europe. The Soviets denounced the deployment of U.S.-made nuclear missiles in Western Europe, threatened countermeasures, and blamed the U.S. for the termination of the INF talks. See p. 2

Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). The USSR broke off the START talks in Geneva to reassess the strategic situation in light of the deployment of INF missiles, which it claimed are "strategic in character" and which allegedly upset the strategic balance in Europe. See p. 5

Weapons in Space. The Soviets used the latest flight of the spacecraft "Columbia" to repeat charges the U.S. is extending the arms race to space. See p. 6

Grenada. Soviet propagandists kept up a steady stream of criticism against the U.S. military action, rejecting the White House's "unfounded" explanations and warning against similar U.S. "gangsterism" elsewhere. See p. 7

Lebanon. Moscow repeatedly warned of large-scale U.S. military operations against Syria in retaliation for the Beirut bombing of Marine headquarters. The U.S.-Israeli strategic accord and subsequent air raid and naval bombardment fueled Soviet charges of U.S. "aggression" in "collusion" with Israel. See p. 9

President Reagan's Asian Trip. Soviet media charged that the trip's purpose was to form a "Washington-Tokyo-Seoul military triangle" as part of an "aggressive" global alliance against the USSR and its allies. See p. 11

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## U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS

In the wake of the Soviet downing of a South Korean airliner, the U.S. military action in Grenada, and the NATO deployment of U.S. cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe, Soviet propaganda was quick to blame the U.S. for what it called an "acute deterioration" in U.S.-Soviet relations. Soviet media saw the U.S. as being run by an administration "blinded by hatred for socialism and the Soviet state and intent on acquiring military superiority" (Sovetskaia Rossiia, November 15). An earlier Radio Moscow commentary (November 7) simply concluded that the White House had "proclaimed a crusade against the Soviet Union, and openly calls for the destruction of the USSR as a social system."

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of U.S.-USSR diplomatic relations, Soviet columnists in Izvestiia (November 16, 17) retraced the ups and downs of American-Soviet relations since 1933, always blaming the U.S. for periods of tension between the two countries. During the current period, which the columnists saw as one of "acute deterioration and aggravation," they charged that the U.S. is applying a "military-strongarm" solution to international problems, seeking to upset the "present strategic equality," to acquire military superiority, and to ensure U.S. hegemony in international affairs. They accused President Reagan of putting the "finishing touches" to the period of detente and returning to the "times of Truman" with his (Reagan's) goal of achieving "internal changes" in the USSR and his vision of the world as a struggle between the "empire of good" and the "evil empire." One of the Izvestiia writers added, however, that the USSR would like to have "normal, stable, good relations" with the U.S., which, considering the Soviet "abundance of goodwill," would lead to "an honest and equitable partnership."

Despite this caveat, Soviet propagandists continued to criticize the Reagan Administration harshly, particularly in foreign policy, and continued to blast President Reagan personally. Pravda (December 22), for example, commented sarcastically on the president's interview with People magazine, in which he reaffirmed his description of the USSR as an "evil empire" seeking to bring about a "world Communist state" (Pravda rendered this as "subjugate the entire world.") Pravda said "it is hard to say which there is most in these words--hypocrisy, ignorance, or shameless lying. If we are talking about the 'empire of evil' and the kingdom of lies and slanders, its throne is in the White House," the paper concluded.

## U.S. "STATE TERRORISM"

Taking advantage of the current concern over terrorism, Soviet propagandists lashed out at what they described as "terrorism" in U.S. foreign policy. They claimed that President Reagan--by his own statements and by use of force in Grenada, Lebanon and Nicaragua--has officially raised international piracy and terrorism to the level of state policy (Selskaia zhizn, November 12). "No other person but Reagan himself," TASS (November 18) charged, "proclaimed secret operations and subversive-terroristic activities against governments not to the liking of Washington."

Izvestia (November 2) charged that the U.S. was committing worldwide aggression through its terroristic activities, and Radio Moscow (November 22) called U.S. terrorism a crime against all mankind. Pravda (December 13) warned that the use of terrorism reflected a "dangerous turn" in U.S. foreign policy similar to what was done in the 1930s "by those [the Third Reich] who led the world to the second world war." Moscow TV (December 25) condemned the U.S. for engaging in "dangerous military activities" in 1983 and in an unprecedented increase in the nuclear arms race. It added that having conducted a policy of international terrorism, "highly placed" officials in Washington have themselves fallen victim to the hysterical fear of terrorists by putting sand-laden trucks and antitank barriers at the White House.

Radio Moscow (November 5) argued that there is no justification in international law for such actions as the shelling of Lebanese villages from U.S. ships or the "invasion" of Grenada. "By authorizing such action the President chose to flout not only the principles of international law, but also the principles on which the United States itself is founded," the radio said. Another Radio Moscow commentary (December 29), in discussing a Pentagon report on combatting state-sponsored terrorism, asked rhetorically how rushing U.S. troops (into Lebanon) in the guise of peacemakers, engaging in subsequent occupation, and provoking discontent and incidents to obtain pretexts for the massive use of armed force can be described as anything but "state-sponsored terrorism."

## ARMS CONTROL ISSUES

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) in Europe. As the initial NATO deployment of the first of 572 new cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe drew close, the Soviets accelerated their propaganda campaign against deployment. They charged that the U.S. was "virtually ignoring" the INF talks in Geneva in its haste to deploy the missiles, with no consideration for the consequences of "this dangerous step." Moscow's

obsession with NATO missiles within minutes of striking distance from the USSR betrays a deep defensiveness that compels the Soviets to oppose deployment, and once deployed, to insist on the missiles' removal in their propaganda initiatives.

They predictably placed the blame for the deployment on President Reagan, who was characterized as being "drunk with military force" (Radio Moscow, November 5) and who would not relinquish his "lunatic plans" to make the "Russians fear that the U.S. will resort to the use of nuclear weapons" (TASS, November 14). The Soviets also charged that by deployment the U.S. was making nuclear "hostages" of its West European allies and hampering efforts to reduce the level of military confrontation in Europe (Sovetskaya Rossiia and TASS, November 10).

The latest U.S. proposals at Geneva were dismissed as "old," "nothing new," and showing "not even a trace of drawing closer" to the Soviet proposals for "sharp reductions" in Soviet intermediate-range missiles. Izvestiia (November 17) complained that the U.S. proposals amounted to an "ultimatum" for Soviet unilateral disarmament and NATO deployment. Pravda (November 18) even pointed to supposedly "blatant tricks" in the U.S. proposals. The Soviets sought to blame the U.S. for engaging in a "dishonest game" at Geneva, allegedly seeking to create a false impression that Moscow was backing away from its insistence on counting British and French missiles (TASS, November 21; Krasnaia zvezda, November 22). [The offer not to count the British and French missiles was in fact an informal Soviet negotiating move which was disavowed when it became publicized, according to the New York Times, November 22.]

Soviet media also continued to repeat earlier Soviet warnings that countermeasures will be taken if the NATO missiles are deployed. Radio Moscow (November 21) warned that the USSR "will certainly adopt countermeasures" against the new "Euro-missiles." Earlier, Literaturnaia gazeta (November 16) had stipulated that the appearance of the new "U.S." missiles "will slam the door on the [Geneva] talks," declaring that "Moscow will not allow Washington to speak to it in the language of diktat or while in sight of first-strike missiles delivered close to the borders of the USSR and its allies."

The Soviet propaganda campaign against the NATO deployment heated up perceptibly with the arrival of the new missiles in the U.K. and West Germany in mid-November. TASS (November 23) denounced the West German Bundestag's majority decision to accept the Euromissile deployment, claiming that "numerous" opinion polls showed that three-quarters of the German public were opposed. On November 23, the day that Pershing II components reached West Germany, the Soviet delegation at Geneva unilaterally announced the "discontinuation" of the INF talks, as Soviet leader Andropov had threatened on October 27.

In reaction to the deployment, Pravda (November 25) issued a new statement by Andropov denouncing the deployment and West European involvement and acquiescence in it. The statement also announced several countermeasures: (1) no further participation in the INF talks since the U.S. "wrecked" the possibility of achieving an accord; (2) abrogation of a moratorium on deploying Soviet medium-range nuclear systems in European Russia; (3) accelerated siting of enhanced-range operational-tactical missiles in Czechoslovakia and East Germany; and (4) as the U.S. increases the nuclear threat to the USSR, "corresponding Soviet means will be deployed in ocean regions and seas taking this circumstance into account."

Once again, Soviet media took their cue from the Andropov statement, lashed out at the U.S. for proceeding with the missile deployment, and tried to shift the blame for terminating the INF talks from Moscow to Washington. Soviet recriminations abounded against the U.S. for the "barefaced hypocrisy" in its regrets over the suspension of the INF talks. Krasnaia zvezda (November 25) denounced President Reagan's "demagogical" and "mendacious" statements trying "to relieve the U.S. of responsibility for the discontinuation of the Geneva talks." The paper accused the President of lying when he asserted that the USSR had continued to deploy medium-range missiles for two years during the INF talks and that "NATO is beginning to restore the balance." Krasnaia zvezda claimed that rather than restoring a balance, the real U.S. goal is attaining missile superiority in Europe. Izvestiia (November 26) said "a bad policy that is dangerous to the people must always be cloaked in a dense cover of lies" and that is why the Reagan Administration and the President himself "are telling so many lies," such as Washington's claims of concern for European security and that the NATO deployment will not aggravate the international situation. The paper added that the U.S. "destroyed the talks with its own hands by beginning the deployment."

TASS (November 29) repeated this theme, claiming that the "true reason" for the breakdown in negotiations was the missile deployment. "To stay in Geneva...would mean de facto approval of the new missiles," TASS and Moscow TV reported. Politburo member Mikhail Gorbachev later said that "to stay on in Geneva in these conditions would mean yielding to deception, indulging in illusions about the possibility of reaching a compromise and joining the campaign aimed at misinforming public opinion" (TASS, December 16).

After the initial NATO deployment, the Soviet antimissile propaganda campaign continued in full force through December. A major effort was made to justify the Soviet departure from the INF talks, to insist on the necessity for the Soviet

countermeasures, to prevent additional NATO deployments, to support the antimissile movement in Western Europe, and to convince West Europeans that more U.S. missiles were against their own security interests. West Europeans were informed that they would pay with "their lives and their cities" for any U.S. decision to launch a nuclear attack on the USSR, thereby lessening the "retribution visited on the United States itself" (Andropov statement, Pravda, November 25).

At a December 5 press conference in Moscow, featuring high-level Soviet diplomatic, military (notably Marshal Ogarkov) and Communist Party representatives that was carried live by Radio Moscow and reported by TASS, the U.S. and those West European countries supporting the NATO deployment were again blamed for the breakdown in INF negotiations. Marshal Ogarkov accused the U.S. of torpedoing the talks by its missile deployment and complained that the U.S. Administration did not want to reach a mutually acceptable agreement on nuclear arms in Europe. Western speculation that Moscow would eventually drop its refusal to accept the new U.S. missiles was rejected, and it was stipulated that Moscow would return to the talks only when Washington was ready to show an active readiness to return to the pre-deployment situation in Western Europe.

In response to U.S. assertions that the U.S. delegation is ready at any time to return to Geneva, Pravda (December 14) charged that U.S. spokesmen like Paul Nitze "are consciously resorting to demagoguery" in making such "unscrupulous" assertions. Claiming that "nothing has changed" as far as the "absolutely unrealistic" U.S. position at Geneva is concerned, Pravda attributed these assertions to "absolving the United States of the responsibility for the breakdown of the talks and...to quelling the growing wave of the antiwar movement."

Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). On December 8, the START talks broke down when the Soviet delegation refused to set a date for their resumption. In a short statement issued by TASS, the Soviets blamed the breakdown on the NATO deployment of new intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe. They claimed that this had caused the global strategic situation to change, requiring a Soviet review of all problems under discussion at START. Earlier, Marshal Ogarkov had warned at the December 5 Moscow press conference that such a breakdown might occur because U.S. efforts to achieve military superiority were moving the START talks "in the same direction" as the INF negotiations.

In the Soviet view, the new cruise and Pershing II missiles are "strategic in character" because they can strike Soviet territory in a short period of time (Pravda, November 21). Their deployment is indicative of the shift in the policy of U.S. "imperialism" from the concept of nuclear deterrence to the objective of winning a nuclear war, Pravda said.

On December 9, TASS criticized the U.S. position at the START talks as one of seeking "constant delays" and of trying to impose unilateral disarmament on the USSR while the U.S. proceeded to build up new U.S. strategic armaments. Summarizing the START breakdown, Radio Moscow (December 9) charged that the U.S. had "deadlocked" the START talks just as it had the INF negotiations on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe. According to the commentary, the U.S. proposal at the START talks would give the U.S. "a more than double superiority" in missiles over the USSR. The Soviet refusal to accept this, of which the Reagan Administration was "hardly unaware," led to a "stalemate." The U.S. broke the strategic balance in Europe by deploying the INF missiles for they would be trained on Soviet command centers and other strategic targets, the broadcast continued, thus adding "sizably to the American strategic nuclear potential." "The stationing of the new American missiles in Europe is changing not only the military balance in Europe but also the overall strategic situation," which is forcing the USSR to take a fresh look at all the problems involved before the talks can be resumed, Radio Moscow concluded.

Weapons in Space. Soviet propagandists used the flight of the "Pentagon-pressured" space shuttle "Columbia" in December to draw attention again to what they called Reagan Administration efforts to extend the arms race to space, and prepare for "star wars" (Krasnaia zvezda, December 2; Radio Moscow, December 12). TASS (December 2) alleged that despite U.S. efforts to stress the purely scientific character of the present flight, "it is no secret that the whole of the shuttle space program is primarily of military significance," claiming that the Pentagon has already reserved more than one-third of all planned shuttle spacecraft flights.

Drawing upon President Reagan's "star wars" speech last March, Radio Moscow (December 1) said the U.S. space research program "is aimed at securing leadership in a sphere free from the arms race so far, and at using outer space in line with Washington's military political ambitions." Krasnaia zvezda said the U.S. goal was to create a "'space superweapon'--to develop and deploy laser and similar systems in space." It warned that U.S. plans for "total" space defense will "undermine" the 1972 treaty on the limitation of ABM systems. Other commentaries alleged that the U.S. was taking "an irreversible step towards

"war in space" by undertaking substantial increases in spending to create and test new "satellite killer weapons at crash rates (Radio Moscow, December 17).

TASS (December 20) warned that "it would be naive to believe that a powerful nation such as the Soviet Union, the pioneer in space exploration, would allow the United States to achieve military supremacy in space."

#### REGIONAL ISSUES

Grenada. From the day--October 25--the U.S. moved into Grenada, and through early November, Soviet media kept up a steady drumfire of criticism denouncing the "brazen aggression" on the part of the U.S. Izvestiia (November 1) set the tone for the continuing Soviet diatribe in November with an editorial charging that "the totally unprovoked and unjustified American aggression against Grenada has made the whole world indignant." Repeating the U.S. "official terrorism" theme, Izvestiia castigated President Reagan for elevating "international terrorism to the status of official policy...in an insane desire for U.S. world domination." Washington's goal, it reiterated, is to try "to increase its sphere of influence and...dominate important regions of the world."

Izvestiia also rejected the "White House's absolutely absurd and unfounded 'explanations' and cheap inventions" regarding the reasons for the Grenada action, and charged that the U.S. Administration was "acting like a bandit in the international arena, cynically flouting every principle of law and morality." Other Soviet media zeroed in on the "heap of lies" the Reagan Administration allegedly told to justify its "piratic" Grenada operation. TASS (November 5) claimed that not "since the Hitler reich" have there been such "glaring lies, slander, perversion of facts and distortion" as those put out by the Reagan Administration.

Specifically, an earlier TASS commentary (November 3) called the threat to American citizens on Grenada a "big lie" which has been "completely refuted" by the American press because "absolutely nothing" threatened them. Radio Moscow claimed that the "depots of Soviet and Cuban weapons" discovered in Grenada really contained only museum pieces--long-outdated models of British rifles. It also questioned the existence of documents found and described as "secret treaties" between the Bishop government and Cuba, the USSR and North Korea. The documents were simply ordinary agreements between sovereign governments, TASS claimed, and contained "not a single clause"

supporting "the utterly slanderous and provocative allegation of the U.S. Administration that Grenada has been turned into a 'Soviet-Cuban base'."

TASS also played down the Cuban troop presence and the construction of a military airfield on Grenada, chalking these claims up as more of Washington's "gross lies" and "hypocrisy." It called the idea that American troops, by occupying Grenada, have very nearly saved the whole Western Hemisphere from the 'Soviet and Cuban threat' a "fantastic invention" by the "masters in the lies department" in the White House.

The Soviets warned that Grenada might serve as a model for future U.S. "gangsterism" against Cuba, Central America and the Middle East (TASS, November 6). For example, TASS (November 24) alleged that Washington is targetting Nicaragua for a similar "bandit-style operation." Grenada was also seen as a lesson for Western Europe--on the eve of the U.S. missile deployment there--about the "recklessness" of U.S. "imperialism" that is now encouraged "to undertake adventures" (Moscow TV, November 3; Sotsialisticheskaya industriya, November 5).

Later Soviet commentaries repeated and amplified a number of ominous themes, some of which were crossplayed from leftist media sources in Third World countries:

- The U.S. is waging psychological warfare in Grenada (TASS, November 18);
- The U.S. resembles Nazi Germany in its move into Grenada (Izvestiia, November 23);
- The U.S. is turning Grenada into a military base and is taking steps to perpetuate its stay there (TASS, November 27 and December 7);
- The U.S. is testing chemical weapons in Grenada (Radio Moscow, December 6 and TASS, December 9);
- "Eyewitness reports U.S. military atrocities on Grenada (TASS, December 19);
- The CIA planned Bishop's murder to prepare the way for U.S. aggression against Grenada (Radio Moscow, December 21 and TASS, December 23); and
- Secretary of State Shultz "distorts the truth" about Grenada when he describes the favorable attitudes of other countries to the "American invasion" and when he says Reagan's actions were welcomed on other continents (Radio Moscow, December 27).

Lebanon. "It would seem that the universal condemnation of the United States for its aggression against Grenada...should have served as a serious warning to Washington...which is planning to carry out a large-scale military operation in Lebanon," TASS reported November 4, setting the stage for continued Soviet propaganda against the U.S. in Lebanon and the Near East. TASS charged that while "hypocritically" claiming to be engaged in peace efforts, Washington is really exploiting the tension in Lebanon "to further extend and consolidate" its military presence there. According to Soviet propaganda, the tension originated in the "U.S.-supported" Israeli invasion of the country and is currently abetted by the U.S. Marines in the Multi-National Forces (MNF). Expounding on a favorite Soviet anti-U.S. theme once more, TASS said these "interventionist actions" represent yet another example of Washington's elevation of international terrorism to the rank of state policy.

Subsequently, TASS and other Soviet media kept up a steady stream of accusations that the U.S. was preparing a "new military adventuristic operation" in the Near East. Soviet propagandists repeated earlier themes that the U.S. operation would be pegged to the October 23 bomb explosions which killed many U.S. Marines and French military personnel as an "act of retribution" against the assumed villain, Syria (Pravda, November 6; TASS, November 9; Radio Peace and Progress, November 9). The dispatch of the battleship "New Jersey" and many other U.S. ships and troops from the Grenada operation to Lebanese waters fueled the Soviet contention that a major military operation was in the offing.

Soviet media saw further evidence of military preparations in the "strategic cooperation" agreed to between the U.S. and Israel during Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's late November visit to Washington. Izvestia (November 30) said the goal was "above all, to strengthen American and Israeli military positions." In another play on the state terrorism theme, the paper added that "Washington has given the green light to the aggressive actions of Israel, which has elevated terror to the rank of its state policy." Radio Moscow (November 30) claimed that the growth of military cooperation between the U.S. and Israel was aimed "primarily against Syria." Pravda (December 1) declared that the Near East is now "threatened by a sharp new aggravation of tension" as a result of the U.S.-Israeli accord, which indicates that the U.S. is "doing everything to strengthen Tel Aviv's aggressive potential."

No sooner was the U.S.-Israeli accord signed than did the U.S. commence bombing Syrian positions in Lebanon in military collusion, in the Soviet view, with Israel (Radio Moscow, December 4 and 5). The U.S. bombing (following Syrian fire on a U.S. reconnaissance plane) and naval shelling (also against attacks on

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Marine positions) led to a spate of Soviet commentaries praising the patriotic Syrian defenders and condemning the U.S. "unprovoked, aggressive action" (TASS, December 5 and 6).

TASS said the "bandit" bombing was intended "to create a pretext for the further escalation of U.S. acts of aggression against Syria" and as such posed "a serious threat to peace in the Middle East." It added that the bombing signalled the start of implementing the U.S.-Israeli accord on strategic cooperation, which it dubbed an "anti-Arab strategic conspiracy." Pravda (December 10) repeated these themes, charging that the bombing represents "a turn toward new military adventures, joint piratical operations against the Arabs, and toward expanding the scale of these operations."

After the U.S. bombardment of Syrian positions began, TASS (December 14) asserted that the Reagan Administration "is following the road which once led the U.S. into a dirty war in Vietnam." According to TASS, the "U.S. intervention [in Lebanon] has steeply escalated...," instead of stabilizing the situation and strengthening peace in Lebanon, as the Reagan Administration claims it is doing. TASS (December 15) also inferred that President Reagan, whose policy in Lebanon is "floundering," is like a drowning man clutching at a straw. Radio Moscow (December 15) warned ominously that the U.S. with its "vast force" in Lebanon is ready for a "big war." It claimed that President Reagan "has made new and more insolent threats against the Arabs" by warning Syria that the U.S. would take "severe revenge" if the Syrian forces continued to fire on U.S. reconnaissance planes flying over them.

Later Soviet commentaries repeated warnings about the danger of war in Lebanon. U.S. forces there were said to be "coordinating all their actions" with Israel. U.S. peace efforts were dismissed as resulting in American naval bombardments and air raids against Lebanese communities. (Radio Moscow, December 24). Moscow TV (December 28) reported the existence of "growing" international and Lebanese "dissatisfaction" with the MNF and cited a Harris poll that claims 64 percent of Americans want the Marines out of Lebanon in the next few weeks. TASS (December 28) passed off President Reagan's acceptance of responsibility for the death of 241 Marines in the October 23 bombing as an "obviously theatrical gesture...to do away with discussion of this tragic incident and to play down the countrywide wave of indignation caused by it." As a passing remark, TASS noted that "clergymen Jesse Jackson, who is seeking presidential nomination, points out that the U.S. plays a 'provocative role' in Lebanon and the Middle East as a whole."

Moscow's support for its closest and strongest ally in the Middle East, Syria, was clearly evidenced in its propaganda, as also was its concern that the U.S. might take decisive military action against the Syrians for obstructing peace in Lebanon and

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encouraging radical Lebanese elements to fire on U.S. and other MNF positions. By constantly warning that the U.S. was planning to unleash a major military operation against Syria, Moscow apparently hoped to bring the U.S. military presence in Lebanon into disrepute in Arab eyes, to blame the U.S. for preparing for war in the Middle East, and to put the U.S. on the propaganda defensive.

President Reagan's Asian Trip. Soviet propaganda claimed that the main aim of President Reagan's visit to Japan and South Korea last November was to step up their military preparations "to gear Asia, following Western Europe and Central America, to Washington's global strategy aimed at confronting the forces of socialism, progress and peace" (TASS, November 9)--in other words, to form a worldwide alliance against the USSR and its allies. According to TASS and Izvestiia (November 5), Washington wants to "knock together" an "aggressive alliance" or "Washington-Tokyo-Seoul military triangle" against the USSR under cover of a "propaganda ballyhoo about an increase in the mythical Soviet threat."

Soviet media also charged that the U.S. wants to change the balance of forces in East Asia by deploying first-strike nuclear missiles, including medium-range cruise and Pershing IIs, in these countries in an effort to increase U.S. military strength near the USSR (Radio Moscow, November 8; Krasnaia zvezda, November 8 and 10). For this Radio Moscow called President Reagan "one of the darkest political figures" in postwar history. TASS (November 11) said the purpose for such a nuclear missile deployment is also for the U.S. "to evade the retaliatory blow itself by exposing its allies to it."

According to the Soviet media, the follow-up visits of General John Vessey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Admiral James Watkins, Chief of Naval Operations, showed the Pentagon's hand in trying "to speed up" the formation of the new military-political alliance (Radio Moscow, November 25, and TASS, November 30). The elections in Japan, however, left Washington "in deep shock" for the future of its "aggressive plans" in Asia as the political destiny of the "most pro-Western" postwar Japanese prime minister became "problematic" (TASS, December 19).

#### OTHER REGIONAL ISSUES

Central America. In the wake of the U.S. Grenada operation, the Soviet media issued a number of commentaries warning that the U.S. was preparing a "new aggression" in Central America, specifically that the Pentagon was planning a "new military adventure" in Nicaragua. Observing that "the center of gravity of the operations to 'save democracy' is being shifted from

Grenada to revolutionary Nicaragua," Pravda (November 17) pointed to U.S. troop buildups in Costa Rica (on the pretext of "building roads," Pravda claimed) and in Honduras (for Big Pine-2 military maneuvers) as evidence that a "new Grenada" is being prepared. Radio Moscow (November 11) noted that American Marines were undergoing "practical preparations for aggression" by holding a landing exercise on the Honduran coast in terrain similar to Nicaragua. TASS (November 29) repeated these themes, trying to give the impression of an imminent invasion, and warned that when the White House gives "hypocritical" assurances of its "peacefulness," people in Central America "realize well that this is merely a propaganda smokescreen for a new aggression that is being prepared."

Turkish-Cypriot Independence. The unilateral declaration of Turkish Cypriot independence on November 15 provided Soviet propagandists with yet another opportunity to twist current events against the U.S. TASS (November 16 and 17) alleged that the U.S. was behind this "unlawful action" in order "to create another seat of tension in the Eastern Mediterranean for the purposes of widening the U.S. military presence in the region." Both TASS and Pravda (November 17) noted the strategic importance of Cyprus and how as a "NATO bridgehead" it could serve as "a most important strongpoint on the approaches to the Near East," especially for a large-scale military operation by the U.S. against the "Lebanese national patriotic forces."

Krasnaia zvezda (December 20) charged that the White House--by showing understanding for the Turkish position on Cyprus-- expects Ankara to consent to deployment of medium-range missiles in Turkey, a country which the Pentagon allegedly regards as a "convenient bridgehead" for waging war against the USSR and as a base for transferring the Rapid Deployment Force to the Near and Middle East.

Iran-Iraq War. Noting that the Iran-Iraq conflict had gone on for more than three years, a few Soviet propaganda commentaries continued to repeat earlier themes about the need to resolve the war or face U.S. intervention. Pravda (November 14) accused "American imperialism [of] using the Iran-Iraq conflict as a pretext for direct interference in the affairs of Persian Gulf countries" and noted that American arms manufacturers hope to see the war prolonged as they collect "fabulous profits" from hundreds of millions of dollars of arms sales.

Komsomolskaia pravda (December 20) claimed that elements of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Forces are stationed on U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf, "obviously waiting for a pretext to join in the conflict and utilize it in their own interests."

South Asia. Articles in Pravda (November 3 and 10) charged that the U.S. is seeking to militarize Pakistan "to turn that country into a reliable proponent of the U.S. expansionist imperialist policy in Asia." The U.S. also was accused of

efforts to destabilize India through CIA support for local terrorists because of the anti-imperialist nature of the country's nonalignment policy.

Other commentaries decried the "shameless" U.S. aid to the "counterrevolutionaries" in Afghanistan (Izvestiia, November 20), which Pravda (November 29) said is increasing, claiming that "no less than \$50 million is spent every year on subversive anti-Afghan activities through CIA channels." TASS (December 12) and Radio Moscow (December 13) scored a "National Forum on Afghanistan" meeting in Washington (allegedly organized by the State Department) as the "latest provocation" of the Reagan Administration "to keep the counterrevolution going ...., to raise their combat spirit and give them (the Afghan bandit ringleaders) its blessings for new crimes."

South Africa and Angola. Several Soviet commentaries in December lashed out at alleged U.S.-supported and -directed South African military operations in Angola. Radio Moscow (December 19) claimed that in the opinion of "African observers," the "racist" Pretoria regime "in its aggressiveness... relies on all-round support from the current U.S. Administration, which is expanding supplies of modern arms to South Africa." (The radio broadcast also said that the U.S. plans to have cruise missiles sited in South Africa and is pushing the construction of two nuclear reactors there, which will generate enough plutonium for two atomic bombs a month.) Pravda (December 28) and Radio Moscow (December 29) charged that in addition to supporting the South African campaign in Angola, the U.S. is "leading" it in an effort to "destabilize" the government in Luanda.

An earlier commentary (TASS, November 7) accused President Reagan of considering South Africa as one of the only five "democratic" countries in Africa and questioned the President's understanding of the word "democracy." TASS called this "expressed view...a slap in the face of the entire world community" and concluded that Washington's goal is "to implant dictatorial regimes" like South Africa's in developing countries, following the "Grenadian precedent."

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